23. The CEC, other Elections Commissioners should be appointed on the recommendation of a body consisting of the PM, Leader of Opposition in both the Houses and Speaker and Deputy Chairman of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha respectively.

24. Only those persons who have cleared all Government dues should be cleared to contest elections. That the matter is pending before a Court of law should be no excuse in the matter.

25. Suitable amendments should be made in the Constitution to empower the Election Commission to identify and declare various offices under the Government to be within 'Offices of Profit'.

Sanction for Cochin Shipyard Repairing Project

3581. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the State of Kerala requesting to accord sanction for the Cochin Shipyard Repairing Project;

(b) whether Government would consider to accord sanction for the project; and

(c) if so, by when Government are likely to accord?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir. Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi has submitted a proposal for expansion of ship-repair facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 98.38 crores.

(b) and (c) The Departmental Expenditure Finance Committee in its meeting held on 14.03.2002 has approved the proposal and action has been initiated to obtain the approval of the competent authority.

Proposal for International Container Transhipment Terminal at Cochin

3582. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for setting up of an International Container Transhipment Terminal at Vallarpadam in Cochin is pending for approval;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the sanction has been accorded to the project by Government; and

(d) if not, the stage at which the matter stands at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (d) The matter is under consideration of the Government.

Pilferage of petroleum products from Mumbai Port

3583. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that petroleum products are being stolen from Mumbai Port; and

(b) if so, the details of precautionary measures taken thereon and when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Occasional instances of pilferage of petroleum products from the pipelines between Mahul and Sewree / Wadala in Mumbai Port have occurred.

(b) Constant vigil is being maintained by Mumbai Port staff by regular foot patrols twice in a shift and vehicle patrols not less than 4 times in a shift along the pipeline route to prevent the pilferage of petroleum products. In additon, the oil industry and the police also patrol this route regularly.

Leasing out of buffer yard of JNPT

3584. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust decided in 1996 to lease out the buffer yard to an outside agency to carry out crane operations and transportation of the containers by tractor trailer and management of the yard;

(b) whether the port had sufficient infrastructural facilities and idle manpower to undertake the functions leased out to the agency;

(c) whether the advantage of developing buffer yard at a huge expenditure of Rs. 4.46 crore was negative by imprudent decision to lease it out at estimated loss of Rs. 20.00 crores; and

(d) if so, the action taken to fix the responsibility?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir. Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) entrusted the management of Buffer Yard to M/s Central Warehousing Corporation in 1997.

(b) No. Sir. JNPT did not have sufficient container handling equipment (Reach Stackers and Tractor Trailers) for carrying out operations at Buffer